

City of Baraboo
Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting
Sept. 13, 2021 – Minutes

Present: R. Franzen, A. Witczak, J. Francisco, S. Mordini, A. Workman, C. Schlender, and H. Kierzek

Franzen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Legal posting of the Agenda has been met. Witczak motioned and Francisco seconded approval of the Aug. 9 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Witczak moved to approve the agenda as printed, seconded by Mordini. Motion carried.

Action Items

a. Discuss and consider proposed Great Sauk State Trail routes through the City, including possible spur connections to local points of interest.

Hardy reported on county planning staff's lead on the public participation process in identifying preferred routes of the GSST. He gave a verbal overview of the discussion on the routes so far, including entering Baraboo from the south on Burma Rd and crossing to the existing trail, which will need to be widened. Initial discussions included approaching the downtown from Walnut to Vine St. Several options were discussed for crossing the river to the north side, or to route staying south of the river. Discussions on crossing Hwy 33 are well timed with the planned improvements to Hwy 33. Franzen questioned how the connection to Burma Rd to DL/ Hwy136 would be made; Workman clarified the existing tentative plan is to utilize South Shore Rd, which would need to be widened. Schlender questioned how the elevation change from the Riverwalk to Hwy 33 would be handled; Mordini said the bike advisory committee is discussing options. Schlender expressed his strong preference for the private properties on 2nd Ave. being purchased to finish the Riverwalk. Hardy clarified that he communicated that preference to the Finance Committee, which did not vote on it, so the Council did not take up the issue. One property may come up for sale soon; Franzen recommended talking to the mayor to make the case to purchase the property.

b. Discuss and consider recommending acceptance of \$150,000 donation and naming rights for the future splashpad at Attridge Park.

Gary Kowalke offered to pay $\frac{1}{3}$ the total cost of the splashpad project: \$100,000 on June 15, 2022, and \$50,000 the following year. Witczak reported that the Splashpad committee would like to accept the offer under either the name 'Kowalke family' or 'Gary & Penny Kowalke.' Witczak motioned to accept the donation of \$150,000 with naming rights to "Kowalke Family Splashpad," seconded by Francisco. Kierzek asked if there is an option to change the naming rights later; Hardy clarified that nothing in the agreement prevents a name change at a later date. Motion carried.

c. Discuss and consider allowing the Baraboo Area Homeless Shelter to purchase monthly Civic Center gym memberships to give to local homeless individuals support in developing healthy living habits.

Witczak presented the Baraboo Area Homeless Shelter's proposal to purchase up to three 6 month memberships at \$90 that could be transferred as 1 month memberships between 6 shelter inhabitants. Monthly memberships typically cost \$22, so the 6-month deal works out to \$15/month, a savings to the Homeless Shelter of \$7/month. Purchases would be ongoing as needed. Witczak described a point system idea which would incentivize engaging in healthy behaviors and could include gift card rewards to grocery stores or other local businesses. The

passes would operate like a punch card system, with 12 punches per month. Kierzek asked if it would make more sense to do a discounted monthly rate at \$15/month. Mordini made a motion to offer the Homeless Shelter a discounted rate to purchase monthly passes at the \$15/month rate, seconded by Franzen. Motion carried.

d. Discuss and consider allowing electric bikes and/or scooters on Riverwalk

Hardy said several phone calls had been received inquiring about the policy regarding electric bikes/scooters on the Riverwalk. Franzen clarified that the electric scooters referenced were not mopeds, but indeed scooters. Mordini said she'd already seen electric bikes on the Riverwalk. Workman offered to bring it before the Bike Advisory group, although noted that the preference is to separate the Riverwalk from the GSST path.

e. Discuss and consider recommendation of submission of an Urban Forestry Grant through the Wisconsin DNR to maintain, remove and plant trees in the Jackson Reserve Conservancy in 2022.

Hardy described the idea to submit a \$30,000 Urban Forestry Grant for the 60 acre Jackson property on Hwy 33 to the Wisconsin DNR. The grant proposal would ask for \$15,000 in funding, with \$15,000 as 50/50 match in in-kind services. Money would be used for labor and materials to remove weed trees, prune desirable trees, and replant areas with native trees. Franzen moved to apply for the WDNR Urban Forestry grant, seconded by Schlender. Motion carried.

f. Discuss and consider 2022 seasonal wage and program fees schedules

Hardy reported that in a survey of 12 local communities, Baraboo Parks ranked lowest in paid salaries, but was the only community that did not have any staff shortages. A new rewards program through Campbell Park gave "lifeguard of the week" gift cards to pool staff. Hardy presented several proposed wage increases, including \$10-11/hr for Red Cross certified lifeguards and a Zoo intern salary of \$150/week, plus housing provided if desired. Francisco made a motion to approve the seasonal wage increases, seconded by Witczak. Motion carried. Hardy presented the proposed program fee schedule for 2022, including increasing the cost of sponsored park benches, picnic tables, and gym rentals in the Civic Center. Discounts are continued in the fee schedule for Boys & Girls Club and Senior Center rentals to 20% below normal cost. Witczak asked about the fee schedule for Attridge Park once the splashpad is constructed; Hardy said the fee schedule can be adopted later. Witczak motioned to accept the 2022 program fees as presented, seconded by Franzen. Motion carried.

g. Discuss and consider 2022 budget and capital project requests

Hardy reported that there will be a 0% increase in the 2022 budget for capital projects, so most items listed for budget consideration will not be funded. Hardy reviewed the items currently listed. Witczak has been working on the understanding that the City will be putting money towards the Attridge Park restrooms. Franzen noted that once construction on a project starts, more resources tend to be located. Schlender inquired about the new picnic shelter and Field 4 lighting at Steinhorst park, which was listed as a past CORP project, but was not reiterated in the updated CORP plan. Witczak moved and Mordini seconded to accept the proposal for the 2022 budgeted capital projects requested. Motion carried.

Information Items

a. Staff Report submitted by Hardy.

Revenues \$23,086.61 for the month of August 2021.

Citizens for Riverfront Revitalization and the Baraboo River Canoe Club both gave money for a bench to be installed at the new canoe put in/take out point near Maxwell Potter Conservancy. Hardy reported that a new Facility Manager, John Sully, had been hired. Hardy also reported that the Campbell Park pool season had ended successfully with no complaints about the status of age or condition of the bathhouse. Parks brought in more revenue than budgeted for, but expenses stayed within the anticipated budget.

b. Subcommittee reports

1. Attridge Park Splashpad and Restroom building project: Witczak reported that \$225,000 cash had been raised so far including the Kowalke foundation proposal. She anticipated that a grant application would be funded in October, and the discussions were upcoming on the agenda for West Baraboo and EDTC to potentially each donate \$25,000 at West Baraboo's next Town meeting (Thursday, Sept. 16).

2) CORP Committee

Francisco reported a successful end to the CORP committee; one member dropped out but at its conclusion the committee still had 8 members. Campbell Park was a long discussion; the group decided that a referendum on what to do with Campbell park would be the best course of action. The committee went through line by line each past CORP item for consideration. Deppe Park was a priority that Francisco emphasized. In all cases, committee decisions were unanimous. Francisco suggested making the "Oak Street overlook" site be considered as a 'Veterans Park.' Francisco reported guiding the group by "wants" and "needs," retaining 'needs' but not necessarily 'wants.' Francisco reported that the Baraboo Country Club has property around Deppe Park that does not have a current plan but could potentially be utilized in some way to support Deppe Park facilities. Francisco wished the next CORP committee chair well. Hardy mentioned that the Riverwalk and GSST have been priorities in previous CORP plans, as well as Campbell Park. The community survey input was substantial and positive. Hardy also noted that in order to apply for grants, they must be in the CORP plan. No further action is needed at this time.

3) Bicycle Advisory Committee

Workman reported that a group of 7 held its first informal meeting on Sept. 2, and the second formal meeting on Sept. 9. This group will meet weekly until the end of the month. The committee now has 8 members. The group is discussing and coming to a consensus on routes to recommend.

Next scheduled meeting: Oct. 11, 2021 at 5:30 pm

Witczak motioned and Francisco seconded to adjourn at 7:03 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Workman, Secretary, Parks & Recreation Committee